

Message Text

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ORIGIN SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-08 ARA-10 EA-09 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13

MMO-04 SIG-02 SS-15 AGRE-00 DODE-00 HEW-06 AID-05

MED-03 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 TRSE-00

NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS STATE 057055

INFORM CONSULS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR

SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON DECRIMINALIZATION OF
MARIHUANA

REFERENCE: STATE 27870

1. EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT WITNESSES, APPEARING MARCH 14
BEFORE THE HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON NARCOTICS ABUSE AND
CONTROL, TESTIFIED IN FAVOR OF FEDERAL DECRIMINALIZATION OF
SIMPLE POSSESSION OF SMALL QUANTITIES OF MARIHUANA FOR PER-
SONAL USE. (TEXT OF STATEMENT OF DR. PETER BOURNE,
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT, BEING TRANSMITTED IN
SEPTEL.)

2. IN RESPONSE TO ANY INQUIRIES ON THIS MATTER WHICH YOU
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MAY RECEIVE, YOU SHOULD MAKE ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT YOUR
QUESTIONER UNDERSTANDS THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "DECRIMIN-
ALIZATION" AND LEGALIZATION." THE DECRIMINALIZATION ACTION
FAVORED WOULD SIMPLY MEAN THAT CRIMINAL PENALTIES WOULD NO
LONGER ATTACH TO A PERSON FOUND IN POSSESSION OF SMALL
QUANTITIES OF MARIHUANA FOR PERSONAL USE. RATHER, CIVIL
PENALTIES AKIN TO THOSE IMPOSED FOR TRAFFIC OFFENSES WOULD

BE IMPOSED. THEREFORE THERE WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE LEGALIZATION OF THE POSSESSION OF MARIHUANA, NOR CONTRAVENTION OF

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OF UNITED STATES OBLIGATIONS UNDER THE SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS.

3. AS YOU MAY BE AWARE, EIGHT STATES IN THE UNITED STATES ALREADY HAVE REDUCED PENALTIES FOR POSSESSION OF SMALL AMOUNTS OF MARIHUANA, GENERALLY SUBSTITUTING CIVIL PENALTIES FOR CRIMINAL PENALTIES. ALSO, IN A NUMBER OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES SIMPLE POSSESSION OF MARIHUANA IS PRESENTLY TREATED AS A MINOR OFFENSE.

4. ABOVE ALL, YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT IT IS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS SHIFT IN POSITION IN REGARD TO THE PENALTY STRUCTURE FOR THE SIMPLE POSSESSION OF MARIHUANA IS NOT RPT NOT INTERPRETED IN ANY WAY TO MEAN A LESSENERED UNITED STATES CONCERN OVER THE CRITICAL PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE. AS YOU ARE AWARE FROM REFTTEL, THE PRESIDENT IS DEEPLY COMMITTED TO INCREASED ACTION ON THE DRUG ABUSE PROBLEM AND SEEKS ENHANCED INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN COMBATTING IT.

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Message Attributes

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